

MFP RELICENSING
Interest-Based Decision Making

Perception

Fundamental to an interest-based approach is the importance that people recognize the limits of their perceptions and perspectives, and appreciate the validity of the perceptions and perspectives of other members of the collaborative.

“The ability to see the situation as the other side sees it, as difficult as it may be, is one of the most important skills a negotiator can possess. It is not enough to know that you see things differently...you also need to understand empathetically the power of their point of view and to feel the emotional force with which they believe in it. To accomplish this task you should be prepared to withhold judgment for a while as you “try on” their views. They may well believe their views are “right” as strongly as you believe yours are.”

From *Getting to Yes*

Tenant’s Perceptions	Landlords Perceptions
The rent is already too high.	The rent has not been increased for a long time.
With other costs going up, I can’t afford to pay more for housing.	With other costs going up, I need more rental income.
The apartment needs painting.	He has given that apartment heavy wear and tear.
I know people who pay less for a comparable apartment.	I know people who pay more for a comparable apartment.
Young people like me can’t afford to pay high rents.	Young people like him tend to make noise and to be hard on an apartment.
I am a desirable tenant with no cats or dogs.	His stereo drives me crazy.
I always pay the rent whenever she asks for it.	He never pays the rent until I ask for it.
She is cold and distant; she never asks me how things are.	I am a considerate person who never intrudes on a tenant’s privacy.

From *Getting to Yes*

“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”

Steven Covey

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An interest-based approach results in “wise agreements.” In the book *Getting to Yes*, this is defined as the following:

A wise agreement can be defined as one that meets the legitimate interests of each side to the extent possible, resolves conflicting interests fairly, is durable, and takes community interests into account.

Positions vs. Interests

- Positions present a specific requirement and/or outcome.
- Interests are what inform the assertion of a specific requirement and/or outcome.
- Once a position has been asserted, people often commit to the position intellectually and emotionally and thereby eclipse potential creative solutions.

Example: Regarding an Increase in Neighborhood Crime

Position	Interest	Possible Options
The police need to post another officer full time in the neighborhood.	<i>I am afraid of crime. I do not see the police in the neighborhood.</i> Interest Statement: Establish effective patrol strategies to ensure reduced crime and neighborhood safety.	Interview residents for input. Review stats on times and locations of incidents. Develop several strategies and get input. Test and evaluate. Make final decision.
All officers need to drive up our street twice a day.	<i>I really want to see the police and know they are close enough to respond quickly.</i> Interest Statement: Being protected by the police and knowing they are on hand for emergencies.	Evaluate existing patrol configurations and develop strategy options. Get feedback. Test and evaluate. May include cell phones with published numbers in patrol units; community policing meetings with residents.
All teenagers should stay inside after school hours.	<i>Teenagers hanging out in the neighborhood scare me; I suspect criminal activity.</i> Interest Statement: Prevent teenage crime.	Evaluate whether teenagers appear to be committing crimes, if yes, identify motives. Generate options to address such as teen center, after school programs, meeting neighbors, etc. Get input and evaluate.
No parking on street after 10:00pm and until 6:00am.	<i>Unknown vehicles scare me.</i> Interest Statement: Identify vehicles that belong in the neighborhood; prevent easy opportunities for criminals to be in area.	Evaluate whether criminals are driving to the area to commit crimes. If yes, develop options for deterring non-neighborhood parking on street. May include easily identifiable permit window stickers, etc.